

THE DEADLY DUO™

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CANADA



image comics presents:

THE **DEADLY** **DUO**™

ERIK LARSEN
Writer • Storyteller

ANDY SMITH
Penciller

RANDY ELLIOTT
Inker

CHRIS ELIOPOULOS
Letterer

REUBEN RUDE
ANTONIA KOHL
Colorists

I.H.O.C.
ABEL MOUTON, BILL ZINDEL, LEA RUDE
Color Separations

STUDIO COLOUR GROUP
Film Output

JOSH EICHORN
Fascinating evolutionary throwback

IMAGE COMICS

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Printed in Canada



HIGHBROW
ENTERTAINMENT

A dynamic comic book panel showing Wolverine in mid-leap. He is wearing his iconic blue and silver X-Men uniform with a yellow 'W' on his chest and a red circular belt buckle. His claws are extended, and he has a fierce, roaring expression. He is moving from the upper left towards the bottom center. Below him, two adversaries are on the ground. One is in a red, hooded, spiked suit, and the other is in a purple suit with a large white 'M' on the back. The background features city buildings and a sign for 'ANK'S ST' and 'IONAL BANK'.

MOVE
WHEN I TELL
YOU TO,
KID...

RRRRR!

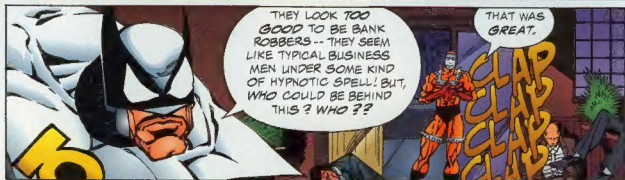
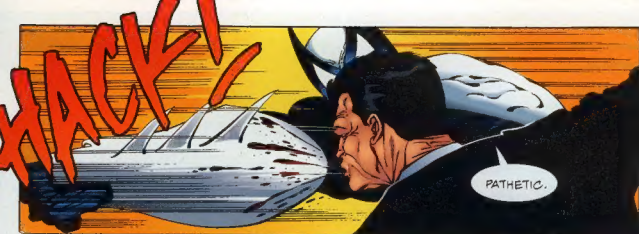
**TIME
TO PAY,
SCUM!**

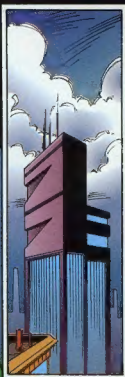
THE DEADLY
DUO HAVE
ARRIVED!

KILL-CATS
COMING AT
YA!

AND
HOW!







AND THIS
IS MY EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY,
LOTTA TOPP.

WOW.

IF I HAD
A SECRETARY
LIKE THAT, I'D
NEVER GO
HOME



AND IN
HERE... IS MY
OFFICE.



THIS IS
WHERE I RUN
MY WHOLE
EMPIRE--IT WAS
HANDLED DOWN
FROM
GENERATION
TO...

?

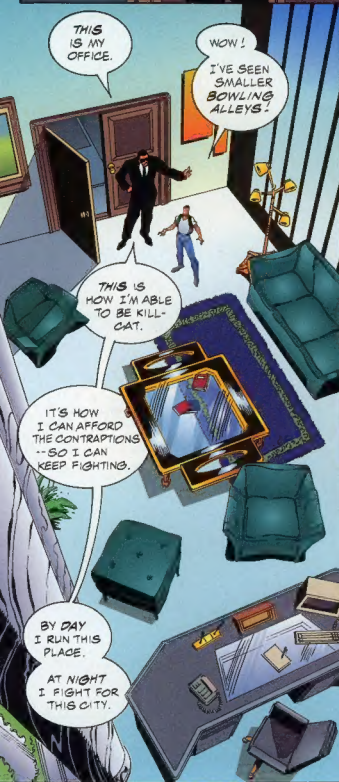
KID?



BAHEM-

MARK.

TEE
HEE.



QUICK-CUT: NEW YORK CITY...

WHERE ARE THEY?!

SKRAK!!!

TALK, SURFACE DWELLERS!

ROMAN!

SPEAK TO ME, HUMAN!

WHERE IS THE WOMAN WHO RAIDED ATLANTIS -- WHO STOLE THEIR WOMEN WHICH THREATENS WAR BETWEEN OUR PEOPLE?

UH
UH
UH
UH

THEY MOVED ON, DUDE. IT WAS GETTING TOO HOT FOR THEM HERE.

THIS CITY HAS TOO MANY SUPER TYPES-- THEY PACKED UP AND HEADED FOR...

"...DETROIT."

YOU WON'T GET FAR, MANEATER.

YOUR EVIL DEEDS HAVE EARNED YOU ROMAN'S ENMITY.

YOU SHALL RUE THE DAY YOU LEFT OUR UNDERSEA DWELLING AND INVADDED THE SURFACE WORLD.

"I WAS A KID
OF SEVENTEEN,
WHEN I WENT ON
A SAFARI WITH
MY PARENTS.

"WE WENT WITH
MY DAD'S BUSINESS
PARTNER, **BIFF
BROWN**.

"TOGETHER, BIFF AND PA
HAD TURNED OUR FAMILY
FORTUNE INTO AN EVEN
BIGGER FORTUNE!

"MY PARENTS
TREATED BIFF
LIKE FAMILY.

"I NEVER LIKED BIFF--
HE WAS TOO HANDSOME,
TOO SMART, TOO LIKEABLE.

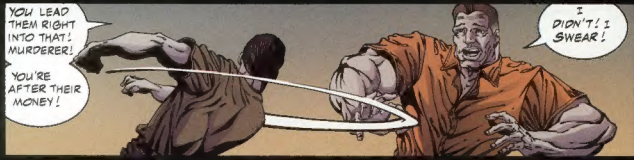
"I NEVER
TRUSTED
HIM.

"THEN I
FOUND OUT
WHY...!

GHAA!!

**MOM!!
DAD!!**

SHIT!!



"WHEN I AWOKE,
I SAW FROM
DIFFERENT EYES.



"MY EYES HAD
BEEN REPLACED
WITH THOSE OF
A PANTHER.

"THEY'D DONE
WHATEVER THEY
COULD TO
SAVE MY LIFE.



"WITH THEIR
CRUDE POTIONS,
PRIMITIVE SURGERY
AND ARCAINE
WITCHCRAFT THEY
DID THAT AND
MORE.

"I BECAME
FASTER--
STRONGER
THAN ANY
MAN!



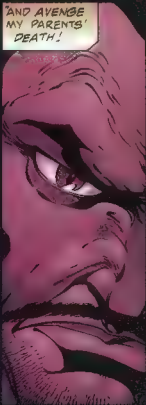
"WHILE I
ENJOYED THE
TIME THERE, I
KNEW, ONE DAY,
I'D HAVE TO
MOVE ON



"TO RETURN TO
AMERICA, RECLAIM
MY BIRTHRIGHT

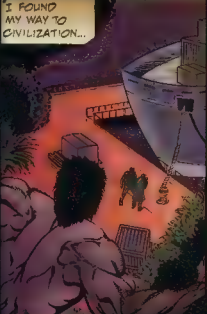


"AND AVENGE
MY PARENTS'
DEATH!





"THOUGH IT
GRIEVED ME TO
DO SO, I LEFT
THE TRIBE



I FOUND
MY WAY TO
CIVILIZATION...



AND



HEADED
FOR HOME.



I STOLE
CLOTHES



"PREPARING
TO LOOK MY
PART.



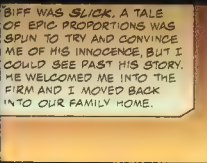
"AND I CONFRONTED
THE MURDERER OF
MY PARENTS!



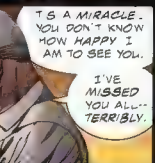
ALAN.



YOU'RE
ALIVE!



BIFF WAS SLICK. A TALE
OF EPIC PROPORTIONS WAS
SPUN TO TRY AND CONVINCE
ME OF HIS INNOCENCE, BUT I
COULD SEE PAST HIS STORY.
HE WELCOMED ME INTO THE
FIRM AND I MOVED BACK
INTO OUR FAMILY HOME.



IT'S A MIRACLE.
YOU DON'T KNOW
HOW HAPPY I
AM TO SEE YOU.



I'VE
MISSED
YOU AL--
TERRIBLY.

I BECAME THE DARK
CRUSADER, KILL-CAT
AND FOUGHT FOR ALL
OF THE VICTIMS, BULLIED
IN THE TOWN OF DETROIT!

I ALLIGNED MYSELF WITH CLEVER
LAWYERS. THROUGH A SERIES OF
LEGAL MANEUVERS I EASED BIFF
OUT, FORCING HIM TO INVEST IN A
SHADY COMPANY.

I USED MY
INHERITANCE
TO FUND MY
CRIME FIGHTING
EXPLOITS.



AS KILL-CAT I
BUSTED THEM, WHEN
THE DUST SETTLED,
BIFF HAD NOTHING



HE WAS
LEFT A BROKEN
MAN

AFTER DOGGEDLY
PURSUING HIM FOR
YEARS, HE DECIDED TO
TAKE THE COWARD'S
WAY OUT AND COMMIT
SUICIDE.

WHY?

WHY
HAVE YOU
DESTROYED
MY LIFE?

WHO ARE
YOU?

DOCTORS HAD GIVEN
HIM A COUPLE OF
MONTHS TO LIVE--
HE WAS IN INTENSE
PAIN.

"THE PRESSURE
HAD, IT SEEMED,
GOTTEN TO HIM.

I'M ALAN WILLIAMSON
-- THE SON OF THE
PEOPLE YOU KILLED!



NO!

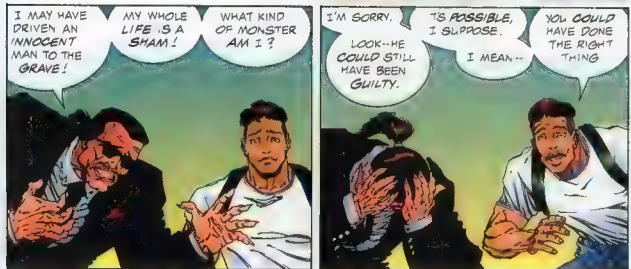
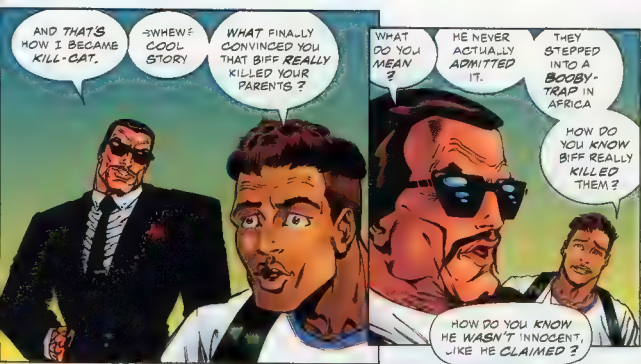
I DIDN'T
DO IT, I
SWEAR!

STAY
BACK!

STAY
BACK!

EAAAAH!!

AT LAST,
IT WAS
OVER.



NO WAIT--
THIS CAN
STILL WORK.

I'LL RE-DEDICATE
MYSELF TO FIGHTING
CRIME AND INJUSTICE!
NO INNOCENT LIVES
WILL, AGAIN, BE
TAKEN!

THERE
YOU GO.

THAT'S
THE
SPIRIT!

OH,
BY THE
WAY...

ABOUT YOUR
EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY--
YOU TWO AREN'T
GOING OUT OR
ANYTHING, ARE
YOU?

ME AND
LOTTA?

WELL,
NO, NOT
REALLY.

WE
SHARE A
BOND.

SHE HAS
A DEEP, HIDDEN
PASSION FOR
ME.

AS HER **BOSS**, I DARE NOT
APPROACH HER BUT I WAIT
FOR THE DAY SHE FINALLY CAN'T
STAND IT ANY LONGER AND
CONFESES HER UNDYING
LOVE FOR ME

OH.

THAT'S
WEIRD.

I WONDER WHY
SHE ASKED ME OUT
TO DINNER AND
TOLD ME TO BRNG
ALONG A TOOTHBRUSH
AND A BATH ROBE
THEN.

AND
STAY
OUT!

DON'T PLAY GAMES WITH ME, SURFACE DWELLER!

I HAVE NO PATIENCE FOR IT!

MY WORLD IS ON THE BRINK OF WAR.

THEY'RE DOWN NEAR BELKER STREET.

BUT THERE'S GONNA BE A LOT OF PISSED OFF PEOPLE IF YOU BREAK UP THE LITTLE PARTY!

TALK.

OKAY,
OKAY
I'LL TALK

SURE HATE TO SEE YOU LIKE THIS--ALL ALONE ON A FRIDAY NIGHT.

I GOT JUST THE TICKET

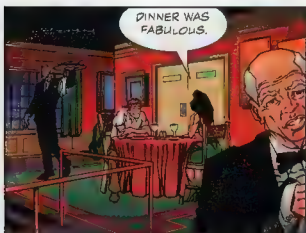
YOU CAN EXPERIENCE THE JOY I'VE FOUND

THERE'S THIS GREAT PLACE, IT'S LOADED WITH BABES.

YOU'LL THANK ME FOR IT.

BOSS...?

HEY, BOSS.



WHAT
DID I TELL
YA?

HOOVER
SLAVE GIRLS FROM
ATLANTIS.

I RECOMMEND
THE "CATCH OF
THE DAY!"

WELCOME,
NEWCOMER

KO I
HOPE YOU
HEAR
THS!

I'M SURE
YOU'LL FIND WE
HAVE THE MOST
BEAUTIFUL G.R.L.S
IN THE WORLD.

ONCE YOU'VE
HAD A GIRL FROM
ATLANTIS, YOU
WON'T SETTLE
FOR ANYTHNG
LESS.

EVER.



SORRY... I'M... UH...
ALLERGIC TO
SEAFOOD.



GOTTA
GO!



HEY!

SEIZE
HIM!

HE'LL RUIN
EVERYTHING
!!





YOU FACE
NO ORDINARY
HUMAN, NOW,
FISH FACE--

WHATEVER

NOW
YOU FACE--
**KILL-
CAT!**

YOU WERE
STUPID
TO COME
HERE.

I CAN'T
ARGUE WITH
YOU THERE.

WROP
SMARK
BA-THREEM!

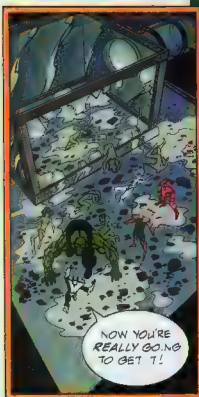
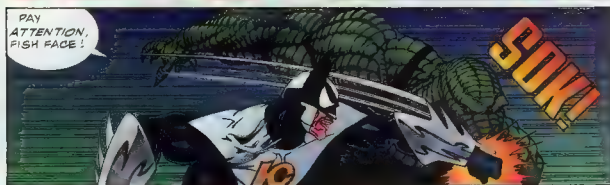
BWUDD

WUMP
WHHHH
PLUPP









IF THE ATLANTIS WOMEN AREN'T RETURNED, NEAPORT WILL BE ATTACKED.

MANEATER WILL DIE IF SHE'S NOT CARED FOR.

YOUR ONLY OPTION IS TO SURRENDER NOW.

I ASSURE YOU, GATOR, THAT THE THREE OF US COULD RIP YOU TO PIECES IF YOU INSIST ON CONTINUING.

CURSES.



WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

ATLANTIAN WOMEN ARE HIGHLY ADDICTIVE TO HUMAN MALES.

THEIR BODIES EMIT FLUIDS THAT ARE LIKE AN ADDICTIVE NARCOTIC. ONCE HOOKED, THEY'LL STOP AT NOTHING TO GET MORE

MALE HUMANS WILL DO ANYTHING TO GET THESE WOMEN -- WHICH MAKES THEM IDEAL AS PROSTITUTES. MEN HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO KILL FOR THEM.

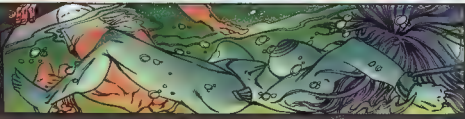
MANEATER HAS DEVELOPED A TASTE FOR HUMAN FLESH -- WITH HER HYPNOTIC STARE SHE'S QUITE DEADLY.

YOU'RE LUCKY TO BE ALIVE

OWHEW!

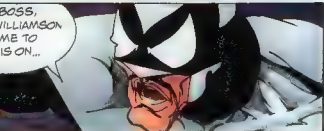
I'LL SAY.

GRRR



OW.

YOUR BOSS, MISTER WILLIAMSON ASKED ME TO PASS THIS ON...



YOU'RE FIRED.

MANEATER
MUST HAVE BEEN
THE ONE BEHIND
A STRING OF
ROBBERIES WE'VE
HAD RECENTLY.

I TACKLED
SOME DAZED
BUSINESSMAN,
JUST THIS
MORNING.

I'LL LEAVE
THESE TWO
OFFENDERS TO
FACE YOUR JUSTICE
SYSTEM --WE HAVE
NO PLACE IN NEUPORT
FOR THEIR KIND.

THE ATLANTEANS,
HOWEVER, MUST COME
WITH ME.

F NE.

I DEPART
NOW TO STOP
A WAR BETWEEN
OUR PEOPLES.

GOOD LUCK,
ROMAN

YEAH.

THANKS
FOR YOUR
HELP.

NO
SWEAT!

I'LL SAY--
YOU DIDN'T
DO A DAMN
THING!

OUCH!

PUNCH

I KNEW
I SHOULD'VE
FINISHED MY
DATE!

KITTY LETTERS

Please send all correspondence to: KITTY LETTERS, P.O. Box 20760, Oakland, Ca. 94620

Welcome to the third issue of Deadly Duo! With this issue we bring this mini-series to a close. But don't you fret! A second one is being worked on as we speak and it will be out (hopefully) in early summer. But let's get on to the letters...

Dear Erik and Andy,

Finally! The long wait is over! The Deadly Duo has arrived and it kicks major ass (hey, neat name for a new character. Dibs!) I can't put my finger on why, but I get a '70s DC feel from this first issue. Not a bad thing. I thoroughly enjoy Kill-Cat and have ever since his first appearance in Freak Force #7. Kid Avenger? Very cool. I think that it's going to become apparent soon that the Kid can handle himself a lot better than K-Cat, he just needs him as a guide to the archaic society of this time era. Otherwise he seems to possess more than enough firepower to overcome any threats that the primitive 1990s could throw at him!

What happened to Pitt? Why won't he be appearing in the second issue as originally planned?

One more thing, for anyone out there who believes that Andy Smith draws the same way as a certain fan-fave artist who used to draw Justice League Europe and the Silver Surfer, well that's just BS!

All in all, another extremely cool book from Highbrow Entertainment! Thank you!

I thought he was Batman... hal hal hal Great!

Matt Nickle

Hermosa Beach, CA

Things work a bit differently at Image than at other comic book companies because the creators own their own characters. On occasion folks get a bit lax at asking permission or showing each other what they are up to—heck, for Image-X month Jim Lee and I didn't even let on what we were doing in each others' comics! Extreme routinely uses the old SuperPatriot and they always have him wearing the wrong costume, show him flying (which he can't do) and spell his name wrong (they spell it Super-Patriot). Every time the Dragon shows up in another book I cringe—his fin is almost always way off and he's always too skinny, too tall and talks weird. Despite all of this, things have worked out pretty well. We seem to take it all in stride.

As far as Pitt went, at the 11th hour Dale decided not to let me use the guy (despite having previously given me permission to use him in a comic). He thought that with all of his guest appearances in other Image books that Pitt was in danger of being over-exposed like Punisher or Wolverine over at Marvel. Considering that Dale has drawn a measly seven issues featuring the character over the last two years I thought it might be a good idea to remind people that the guy still exists! In any case, I told him I'd take the character out of the Deadly Duo but he, apparently, thought it would be a good idea to have this little letter sent my way...

Dear Mr. Larsen,

This firm is general legal counsel to Dale Keown. We are of the understanding that in the 72nd issue of Advance Comics, as published by Capital City Distribution, and in Diamond Comic Distributors' December solicitation, you advertised and solicited the second issue of a comic entitled "Dynamic Duo" (the "Comic"). We also are of the understanding that you own, either personally or through an entity controlled by you, the property rights to the Comic and its characters.

In your advertisement and solicitation, you indicated that the comic character "Pitt" would guest star in the Comic. As you know, all property rights in Pitt are owned exclusively by Dale Keown. Mr. Keown has advised us that at no time did you secure permission from him regarding the usage of the Pitt name or likeness in the Comic. Furthermore, on or about September 28, 1994, Mr. Keown personally contacted you by phone and notified you that the usage of Pitt was not authorized, and would not be authorized, regardless of your offer to pay royalties. He also indicated that you should take whatever steps necessary to terminate the solicitation of orders of the Comic, including notification to the above-referenced comic distributors that Pitt would not be appearing in the comic.

As of this date, Mr. Keown has not seen, nor have you provided him with, any documentation which indicates that your solicitation of the Comic with Pitt as the guest star has been terminated.

Thus, this letter is to reiterate Mr. Keown's position: the solicitation and advertisement of his character Pitt was unauthorized and illegal. Moreover, if Pitt appears in the published version of the Comic, such appearance will be unauthorized and illegal. Continued solicitation or publication of Pitt with reference to the Comic will result in Mr. Keown taking whatever legal action available, including but not limited to obtaining an injunction or disgorgement of profits.

Thus, Mr. Keown demands that you immediately terminate your outstanding solicitation of the Comic with Pitt as the guest star.

Please be aware that by copy of this letter, we are hereby notifying Image Comics, publisher of the Comic, that you do not have authorization to use the Pitt character and likeness.

Very truly yours,
Jones & Keller, P.C.
By:
David A. Sayer

cc:
Dale Keown
Phillip M. Foxhoven
Image Comics

It's been a pleasure doing business with you.

Dear Erik,

Rewind around 20 years. If *The Deadly Duo* was a Marvel comic, we would have seen "Springing from the pages of *Freak Force*! It's the newest barrel of fun from the House of Ideas, *The Deadly Duo*!" Fun, yes. Filled with the same spunk of *Freak Force*, yes. As good? Getting there.

The debut of *Deadly Duo* pleased me, and I could feel the enthusiasm you have for *Kill-Cat* and the *Kid Avenger* as well as the fun you must have had writing this series. Still, the story seemed to be missing something compared to your stellar work along on *Savage Dragon* and with Keith Giffen on *Freak Force*. The opening sequence was a cliché, and too "expected" to have any effect on the reader anymore (for instance, how many times can the writer of *X-Men* start a story with some no-holds-barred, amazing fight sequence without the readers sighing and saying "Oh. The Danger Room. Another excuse to fill up 6-7 pages"?). After the opening, I got more and more intrigued by the *Kid Avenger* and his time-travelling exploits, which should be one of the best parts of the series. The character's sense of humor is on-target, and I like the way in which he talks to himself, or just breaks the fourth wall. The climactic battle which *Kid* joins up with *Kill-Cat* was also a good part of the story, but—that's it! After two fights and an amusing intro sequence for *Kid Avenger*, the story was over!

Hopefully you can tell from the tone of this letter that I enjoyed *Deadly Duo* #1. But I know that you could do better. Reviewers shouldn't be so ashamed to admit that in between servings of *Sandman* and *Sin City* they can enjoy a comic with a lot of action and excitement. Comics may have come a long way since the '30s and '40s, but "fun" should still be a key word associated with comics. Maybe this industry shouldn't be regarded as a kids' medium, but every book doesn't have to be done à la Alan Moore. You've proven that. But don't get too comfy; I hope the next three issues of *Deadly Duo* give us a little more meat among all the humor and amusement. Maybe you don't have to go one step further than *Freak Force* (as you said in the editorial) because that book does manage to keep things entertaining and light. I'd settle for another FF any day!

The artwork was great, and this is coming from somebody who isn't usually a big fan of Andy Smith's. His work seems to come from the Bart Sears school of artwork—no big secret considering Andy's position at the now-defunct (?) Ominous Press, founded by Mr. Sears. But here, the work of Mr. Smith and Randy Elliott took on a new life, to wonderful results. *Kill-Cat*'s costume is still rather inventive and visually impressive, while the layouts and finished art had spunk. Nice job.

Another Erik Larsen #1 has yielded another success. No big surprise, after all. I thought I was buying *Batman*! (Couldn't resist; that last line was great!) Anyhow, see you in 30.

Joey Marchese
Clark, NJ

The opening sequence was there to illustrate *Kill-Cat*'s obsession with *Dart* not to trick readers into thinking this was a real battle. Taken as a whole, these three issues of the *Deadly Duo* should give you a pretty good idea of what these guys are all about (and what to look forward to in their next mini-series).

Dear Erik,

Let me start off by saying that I've been a fan of yours for a long time. I'm talking about your *Doom Patrol* days.

You have my vote to make *The Deadly Duo* a regular series, the first issue was excellent. Andy Smith is a keeper, he draws a mean *Kill-Cat*. Painted ears and cat eyes? I thought that *Kill-Cat* was just a normal guy who wore funny

looking pjs. It looks like it's going to be a great looking mini-series. Congratulations on your kid, hope he doesn't slow you down though.

Dan Chapelhow
Canmore, Alberta,
Canada

This issue gave you the low down on *Kill-Cat*.

Dear Mr. Larsen,

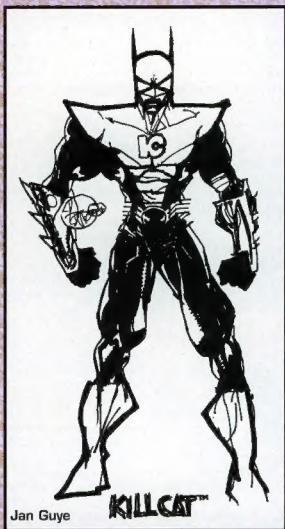
On the last page of *Deadly Duo* #1, the shocking truth comes out—"Kid Avenger" is from the DC universe future! But which one? *Armageddon 2001*? *Elseworlds*? *Kamandi*? Oh wait, I know! It's...what's that? It was a joke? Oh.

Actually, I think *Deadly Duo* was a big mistake. You've opened yourself a rather large can of worms. Virtually every loyal *Highbrow* reader is going to try and convince you to make *Deadly Duo* a monthly mag. And, to be honest, I wouldn't mind that either. I desperately want to see *Kill-Cat* take on the villains mentioned in page one. Their names are so cool, it'd be a tragedy not to see them go toe-to-toe with the *Deadly Duo*, dream sequences notwithstanding.

All I can say is you're the only one to blame for the barrage of requests to come.

Christopher Roesler
Sparks, NV

I can take it.



Dear Erik & Co.,

Following in the tradition of DD #1, DD #2 once again delivered the goods. This could very well turn out to be the funniest limited series of the year. The highlight of this ish, of

course, was the toilet conundrum. All aspects were covered and presented quite well. I can't believe that this series is almost over! Add mine to the voices who want to see DD made into an ongoing.

Hmmm... "Chunky Butt" magazine... "Big Buns" diner...lemme guess, DD #3's surprise villain will be none other than Sir Mix-a-lot, right?

In case I forgot to mention is, Kill-Cat's chest symbol is one of the most original I've ever seen. Good show.

Fanboy stupid question time:

1. You knew it was coming: Why was DD #2's guest star changed from Pitt to Maul at the proverbial last second? Personally, I think the story worked just fine, regardless, but I know a few retailers who were none too happy with the outcome of things.
2. Any chance of a Dung action figure? "Now available at Toys 'R' Us. Batteries and fecal matter sold separately."
3. Will the Annihilators become prominent foils for the heroes of Highbrow (got a nice ring to it; don't you think)?
4. How much aftershave does Kill-Cat go through a week?
5. With regard to Kid Avenger's protective suit, couldn't radiation still creep in through the mouth? (You can see his teeth, you know)
6. How much longer are you gonna make us wait before Kill-Cat meets Dart again? (Sigh. Is nothing sadder than unrequited love?)
7. Would you say Kill-Cat thinks of Kid Avenger as a partner or a sidekick?
8. Will it be explained why Kid Avenger "missed the mark?"

But for anyone who might criticize you promotional prowess, Erik; three words: **HOOKERS FROM ATLANTIS!!!** Can't wait! (Uh, this doesn't mean that Kymaera's gonna stop by, does it?)

Until Kill-Cat is mobbed and trampled to death by Trekkies, all hail Highbrow!

[shot Bambi's mother!]
Harry Simon
Las Vegas, NV

- 1: See above.
- 2: Hey kids— use your own!
- 3: Nothing is permanent at Highbrow but we'll keep these guys around a while longer.
- 4: He buys it by the five gallon drum at his local Ralph's.
- 5: Protective force fields around mouth and eyes.
- 6: Next mini-series for sure.
- 7: Sidekick.
- 8: It was already. Several lights were out on the digital read-out of his time machine, making the 9 from 1994 look like a 7 as in 1974.

Dear Kitty Letters,
Re: Issue #2

Introduction: All right, I want this out into the open right now...is DD going to be a regular series? Please say yes.

Inside (Art): Andy Smith, Bart Sears, Andy Smith, Bart Sears. Uh-h, which used this style first? The Kid looks good as a "normal human". Can we get some real names? Also, I've said it before, I'll say it again...Randy Elliott is a great inker.

Inside (Story): A debate over the seventies? Sounds cool. Also, does the Kid's future coincide with the other Image creators' view of the future? Kill-Cat is a great character with a lot of potential. Exploit it.

Overall: Although this issue lacked what the first one did, it was good. 8 out of 10. Why was Maul there?

Conclusion: Dungi! Dungi! Dungi! Dungi! Hoo hoo hoo hoo! Good luck and keep it coming!

MAC
Wyckoff, NJ

The Kid Avenger is Mark Osborn (as revealed in DD #1) and Kill-Cat is Alan Williamson (as revealed in DD #2).

The Kid's future doesn't really follow anybody's future as far as I know. I have enough trouble keeping track of my own plot lines, much less the rest of Image. (I go along with the divergent future theory—that the future is changeable. The Kid comes from a possible future—one where the Earth looks to be in pretty bad shape).

As for why Maul was there— why, for the *Hungry Heifer Mega-Meat*™ of course!

Dear Deadly Duo Dudes:

Although I was initially unimpressed with Kill-Cat when he first appeared in the pages of *Freak Force*, I am really enjoying this mini-series and looking forward to the next one (as well as keeping my fingers crossed that the "possible" ongoing series become a reality). Kill-Cat is still not my favorite Highbrow creation (this honor goes to Barbaric and Ricochet in the form of a tie) but I do feel he has earned a place not only in the "Highbrow Universe" but also in my comic collection. Kid Avenger is also a pretty cool character but his seventies fascination makes him a little scary in my book. However, I love how much trouble he is having adjusting to this time period— this is one of the more realistic dealings with time travel I've seen in a while—or at least one of the funnier ones.

So far, issue #2 is my favorite, not only was there a great guest appearance by Maul but it also included the return of Dung and The Annihilators, my all time favorite comic relief super villains. Which leads me to wonder if they'll be making their way back to Chicago and the pages of *Freak Force* or *Savage Dragon* any time soon?

In the end (of this letter at least) let me just say, thanks for changing my mind about Kill-Cat as well as Kid Avenger, because at least for the time being I can once again honestly say: "I've never met any of your Highbrow creations that I didn't like."

D. Chris Lett
Dayton, OH

The Annihilators will be back in Chicago one of these days. In the meantime they're doing some jail time.

Dear Mr. Larsen,

When you "killed" the Annihilators in *Savage Dragon* #6, did you plan on returning them eventually or did the idea just surface when you were plotting out *Deadly Duo*?

Christopher Roesler
Sparks, NV

P.S. - What happened to the villain with the big curving horns who was with the other Annihilators in *Savage Dragon* #6?

Yes, I'd intended for them to survive. A couple of the members are still lost in another dimension. Whether they ever get out is a question for another day.

Dear Erik,

What? We're back to a three-issue mini-series again, as was in fact the original schedule before you announced *Deadly Duo* would run for four issues instead? Kinda reminds me never to even try to comprehend the logic behind math done by comic book creators.

Anyhow, whether it be three or four issues, I'm still thoroughly enjoying this series thus far. *Deadly Duo* #2 served as a nice contrast to last month's premiere issue, as the latter was mainly action-oriented, whereas the former basically served as a means for the readers to get somewhat familiarized with the character of Kid Avenger, pushing the action of this very issues back to only a few pages at the end of the story. Apart from being a nice contrast, it also gave some more substance to

both the main characters, so seeing things from that angle, one must come to the conclusion that thus far, this series is being nicely balanced, for which my compliments.

As for Kid Avenger's predilection for the seventies, it strikes me both as rather absurd and beyond any credibility. I mean, here's a guy living in the sixty-fifth century, completely addicted to seventies' TV-shows, books and whatever not. Although I do not by any means fully agree with Kill-Cat's assessment of the seventies, I nevertheless can't see why somebody from the future would have such an interest in that particular decade, seeing how both the sixties and the eighties were, historically seen, of more importance than the decade between those two. On the other hand, it serves the light-hearted atmosphere of this series just as well, of course.

In retrospect, Maul's appearance seems somewhat obsolete to me, seeing how the guy actually said as much as one whole sentence and a "huh?" and a "nah." Maybe this is the best way to handle somebody else's character (it certainly is the easiest way) without running the risk of making him or her acting out of character or missing the point completely, but if that's the case, I'd rather see no such guest-appearances anymore. You'd be much better off to use one of your own characters, whether already created or completely new.

As fellow letterhacker Augie De Blicke Jr. has already noted, Andy Smith's artwork is both very reminiscent for Bart Sears' and lacking background details. I want to add, though, that I feel the latter can't simply be assessed as lacking, for the absence of any background artwork on several of Andy's panels actually is very suited for a series as *Deadly Duo*. Brilliance through simplicity, I'd say, which makes this book accessible visually as well as story-wise.

Looking forward to the conclusion next month, as well as the second mini-series to appear later in the year 1995!

Olav Beemer
Zeist, The Netherlands

When we started this mini-series, it was planned as a three issue mini-series. A fourth issue was added because Andy was looking for work and then dropped because he got offered an ongoing book for another comic book company and could no longer fit it in his schedule.

I don't think it's necessary that every time a character guest stars that they have to be in some major story. The characters exist in the same universe, that alone is reason enough for them to run into each other.

Dear Erik,

I love the premise of the new *Deadly Duo* mini-series. I think you've come quite a long way since leaving Marvel in your ability to tell a very enjoyable and thoroughly entertaining story. Did you know from the beginning of your career that you had a proclivity for humor? The scene with Kill-Cat saying how there were thousands of Americans trying to live down a prom picture with wide lapels, and muttonchops was absolutely hysterical. Dead on target too, I might add.

Although you may feel that the *Deadly Duo* are your babies, and you might be wary of passing them onto another writer, I must say that I really would like to see more of them. Wouldn't they be safe in the more than capable hands of Keith Giffen. Perhaps? You work well together on *Freak Force*, so why not?

It looks like you have way too many killer characters for yourself alone to handle. That's not a bad thing at all, I just hope that someday you can find scribes for all of your offspring. Do you accept plots, scripts, or character bios from fans? If so, I'd like to know what kind of format that you yourself look for, and what goes into the dumper when you receive them. Thanks! Long live Highbrow!

Matt Nickle
Hermosa Beach, CA

The problem with most plots from fans is that they take too long to read! I simply don't have enough hours in the day to read some of the novels I'm sent. A basic outline that hits key plot points is all that's required to begin with—if I like that I'll ask to see that plot developed further.

Keith doing a plot down the road isn't out of the question.

Dear *Deadly Duo*,

I just finished reading issue #2 and it was even better than the first. These two heroes were made for each other, they are very cool. I know this comic book is a mini-series, but I hope you guys at Image reconsider and make it a regular ongoing series. The story in this comic is great, the art is also great, I'm looking forward to buying the next issue and reading their next deadly adventure. Well, that is all for now and see you in the next issue.

Irving Arroyo
Brooklyn, NY

I'd like to thank all of you for supporting this comic and I hope you'll be around for the next mini-series out later this year.

I'd like to thank Aaron Katz one more time for helping me come up with these characters nearly twenty years ago. In print at last! It's been a dream come true!

-Erik Larsen.



These two drawings are the handiwork of Aaron Katz who helped create the *Deadly Duo* with me in 6th grade!

